



STATE OF CONNECTICUT • COUNTY OF TOLLAND  
INCORPORATED 1786

# TOWN OF ELLINGTON

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TOWN PLANNER'S OFFICE

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## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 11, 2012, 7:00 PM  
TOWN HALL ANNEX, 57 MAIN STREET, ELLINGTON, CT

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** David Hurley, Charles McCleary and Sean Kelly  
**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Chairman Christopher Todd and Stefanie Cunningham  
**STAFF PRESENT:** Lisa Houlihan, Assistant Town Planner and Cheryl Benton, Recording Secretary  
**OTHERS PRESENT:** James Prichard

### I. CALL TO ORDER:

Acting Chairman David Hurley called the meeting to order at 7:04 p.m.

### II. PUBLIC COMMENTS (Non-agenda items): NONE

### III. NEW BUSINESS:

1. Report: Board of Selectmen action on Kloter Farms Tax Abatement referral.

At the last meeting, the commission made a positive referral to the Board of Selectmen in regards to Kloter Farm's application for a tax abatement. The commission recommended the approval of a two year tax abatement for Country Warehouse, LLC (Kloter Farms). Ms. Houlihan reported that clarification from the Town Attorney was needed regarding the interpretation of the actual program, as well as, clarification of abatement policy parameters which includes three different thresholds as follows:

The length of time of the fixed assessment is estimated on cost of improvements only to real property as follows:

1. Not less than \$3,000,000, no more than 7 years.
2. Not less than \$500,000, no more than 2 years.
3. Not less than \$25,000, no more than 3 years and no more than 50% of increased assessment.

Ms. Houlihan reported that the First Selectman thought that Kloter Farms might have an opportunity to be eligible for more than \$500,000 because their appraisals came in at almost \$1.3 million and \$1.5 million. Ms. Houlihan stated she believed the commission's desire would be to get Kloter Farms as much as they applied for and decided it would be best to get clarification from the Town Attorney and that the commission make a new

motion which would provide flexibility for Kloter Farms to get over \$500,000 as well as two complete tax years.

**MOVED (KELLY) SECONDED (MCCLEARY) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO GRANT 100% REDUCTION IN ASSESSMENT FOR THE REPLACEMENT OF PROPERTY AT COUNTRY WAREHOUSE, LLC (KLOTER FARMS) FOR TWO TAX YEARS.**

#### **IV. UNFINISHED BUSINESS:**

1. Report: Review of Mission Statement.

Commissioner McCleary noted that the first and last bullets of the statement should be combined. Commissioner Hurley suggested adding a bullet point in regards to the planning to attract commercial growth and enhance business districts in the community. Commissioner Kelly to send his changes to Ms. Houlihan so she can add them to the record. Commissioner Hurley suggested adding a bullet around making businesses aware of what support, funding, incentives and other resources are available – the commission would foster information for these programs. The commission decided to table any action until the next meeting on February 8<sup>th</sup>.

**NO MOTIONS OR DECISIONS.**

2. Report: Agricultural Initiatives.

Ms. Houlihan shared a letter from Peter Charter to the First Selectman, Maurice Blanchette, in regards to Mr. Charter's request that the town investigate a tax exemption program on farm buildings. Mr. Charter also included a list of towns who currently have adopted a tax exemption for farm buildings, a statute, and a document from the CT Farm Bureau on the statute. In October, discussion was tabled to wait until 2012 to address. The Assessor's feedback is that it will be time consuming to investigate due to unforeseen implications on the PA-490 for the farmland exemption. In 2003, Rhonda McCarty was asked to do research on the program, however, the research done was not extensive enough to have a tax exemption program; therefore, they are hesitant to move forward to investigate without direction from the Board of Selectmen. Commissioner Hurley suggested reaching out to some towns on the list to obtain more information. Ms. Houlihan stated that Ellington has an ordinance on the process for tax exemption on farmland and that there may be some people that are in the PA-490 that may be pushed out due to the tax exemption program. Mr. Prichard did not have concerns with any impact to the PA-490. Ms. Houlihan stated that it is the Economic Development Commission's role to create tax incentive programs for farmers in addition to other businesses. It is the commission's mission to support it, then that support goes to Board of Selectmen who then decides whether or not to spend resources to investigate. There is benefit for farmers and it would preserve working farmlands. This program encourages farmers to invest in property and continue to stay in agricultural business. Mr. Prichard suggested moving forward, and getting a report from Rhonda McCarty, as it is an issue that has been put off for many years.

**MOVED (KELLY), SECOND (MCCLEARY) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO RECOMMEND TO THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN TO EVALUATE AND CONSIDER**

**THE CT GENERAL STATUTE TAX EXEMPTION PROGRAM FOR FARM BUILDINGS  
IN ELLINGTON.**

**3 Report: Business Surveys and Site Visits.**

Ms. Houlihan reported that the businesses scheduled for site visits are Dymotek, Big Y, Ellington Pizza, Dzen, and Ellington Ridge Country Club. Big Y is available Thursday, January 26<sup>th</sup> at 10:00 a.m. Dymotek is scheduled tentatively for January 26<sup>th</sup> at 11:30 a.m. Ms. Houlihan has some calls in place for the others.

**NO MOTIONS OR DECISIONS.**

**4. Report: Business Directory/Virtual Welcome Wagon.**

Ms. Houlihan shared a copy of a Somers Business Directory provided by Ellington Printery. Ms. Houlihan clarified some pricing shared at the last meeting: The \$18 represents the initial set up fee for type setting and the design of the booklet. The Somers booklet is 72 pages and the total cost was \$1,584 to create the template for the book. Printing costs for 4,000 copies would be \$.50 per book – could be more or less depending on how many are printed. The Ellington Printery would be willing to negotiate in competitive bidding to win the job. If the commission wanted to give the Ellington Printery a full page advertisement on the front cover, they would reduce the price. As far as costs to mail, this would qualify for a bulk rate. Currently the rates are \$.38 flat rate for a letter, and \$.90 for parcel. The directories would fall somewhere in between. However, there will be new rates on January 22<sup>nd</sup>. Rates would also depend on weight. The directories would not be ready to mail until the summer, so the rate will change by then. The Town Assessor has a database which has over 900 companies that are in the database. However, the list cannot be used as it contains leases and anyone who gets a personal property statement. Ms. Houlihan requested the information from the Assessor for next month. Ms. Houlihan stated she called the folks in Somers, who assisted with creating the directory booklet, to ask how they went about soliciting advertising.

**NO MOTIONS OR DECISIONS.**

**5. Report: Tax Incentive Programs**

No report

**6. Report: Current Economic Activity.**

No report.

**7. Report: Airport Feasibility.**

Ms. Houlihan reported on the airport feasibility study. Ms. Houlihan reached out to East Windsor to see where they are on the skylark study. No study is being conducted due to lack of funding.

**V. ADMINISTRATIVE BUSINESS:**

1. Approval of the December 14, 2011, regular meeting minutes:

**MOVED (KELLY), SECOND (MCCLEARY) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO  
APPROVE THE DECEMBER 14, 2011 REGULAR MEETING MINUTES.**

2. Election of Officers (Chairman and Vice Chairman):

Commission decided to table any action until next month's meeting until more members present.

3. Correspondence: None

**VI. ADJOURNMENT:**

**MOVED (MCCLEARY), SECOND (KELLY) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO  
ADJOURN THE MEETING AT 7:55 P.M.**

Respectfully submitted,



Cheryl Benton  
Recording Secretary